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Redistricting Testimony
Full Name: Alejandro Ray Smith

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My name is Alejandro Smith and I am a resident of North Louisiana, specifically Shreveport. Shreveport is the 3rd largest city in the state. It is home to some of the oldest architecture in the state and was the location of one of the first colleges for women in the region. It is both a city that contains HBCU satellite schools, colleges, and professional schools such as med school and more recently a law school. Unfortunately, the parish lost population from 2010 to 2020. It is now represented by 23,000 less people than it was in 2010. However, Bossier, the parish which borders Shreveport right across the river, saw their populations increase by about 12,000. Additionally, because some neighborhoods are in a house district which also includes the neighboring parish of Bossier, some of the uniqueness which makes up Shreveport is diluted by the concerns of Bossier residents who do not represent the same interests as those of us who live in Shreveport. We now have the opportunity for a more cohesive district which would encompass Shreveport. I believe that if we draw maps that keep communities together and do not "crack" and "pack" neighborhoods to dilute voter power, we can build even closer relationships when we can all elect candidates of choice. Our districts deserve representatives who are aware of the important landmarks in and near their districts which affect the most vulnerable and this is achieved by drawing compact districts that keep communities together and to not reduce their power. We need elected leaders who understand the necessity in improving infrastructure across neighborhoods and communities equitably and making our schools, healthcare facilities, access to jobs, and affordable housing stronger. Fair maps equal fair elections.

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Alejandro